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THE
PEACOCK AT HOME
ILLUMINATED

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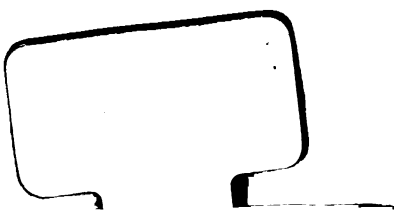
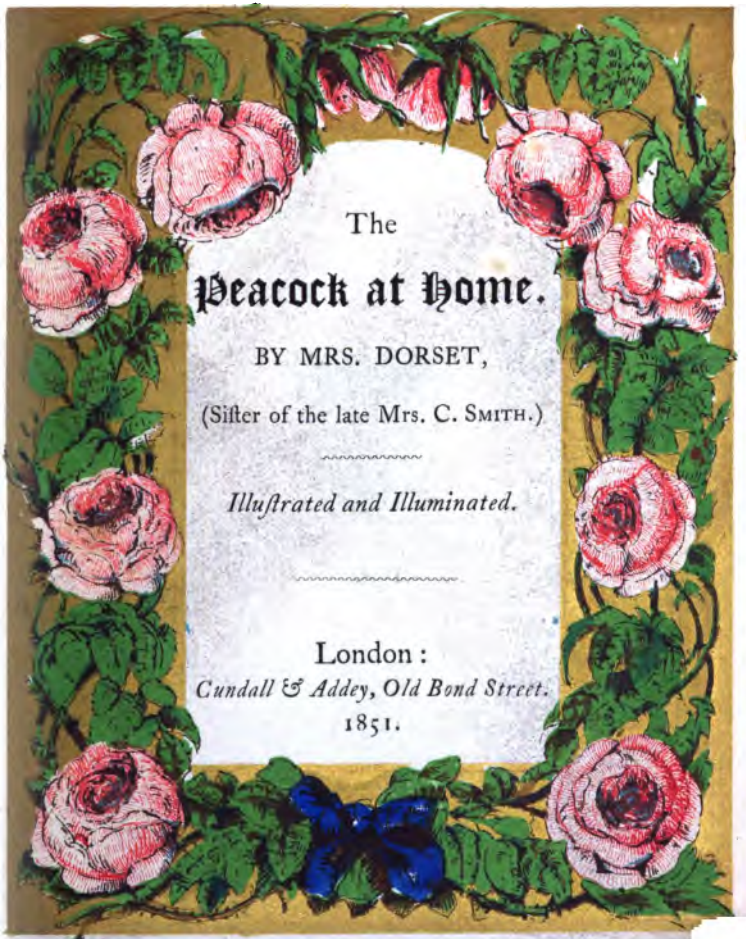
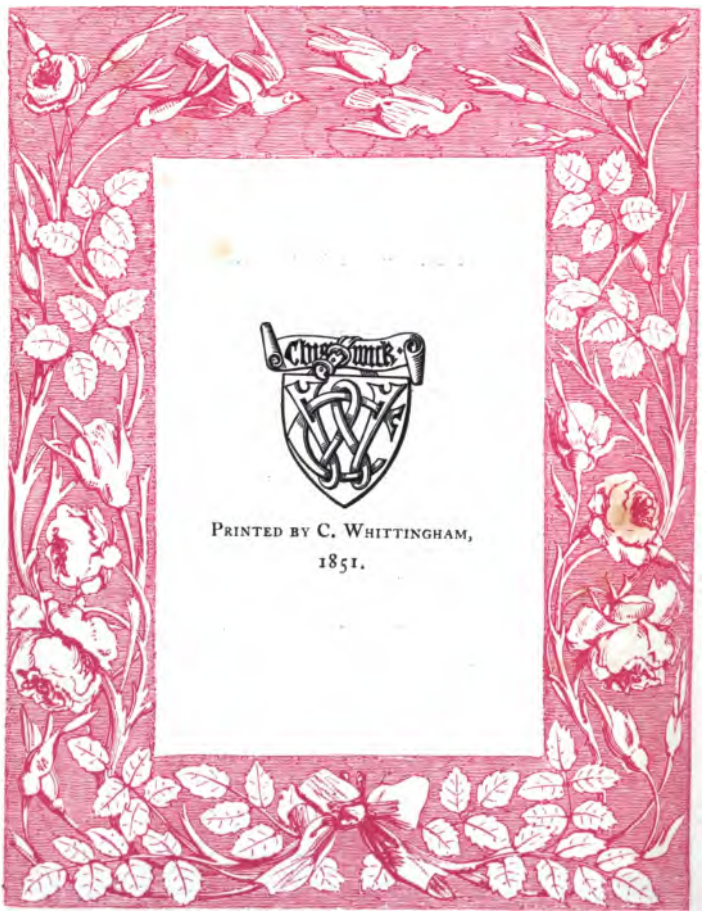
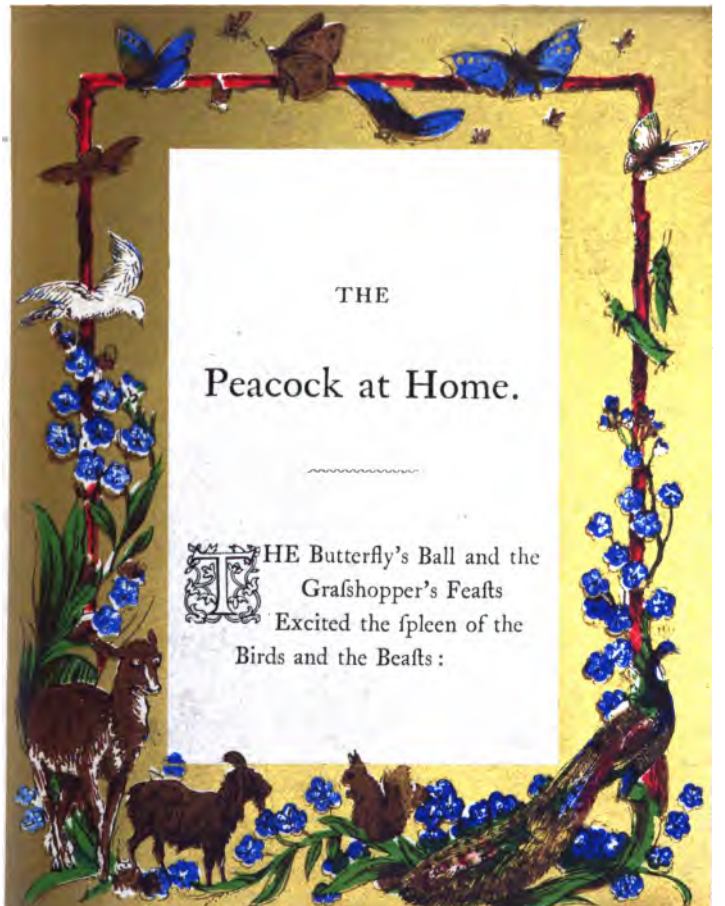



The
Peacock at Home.
BY MRS. DORSET,
(Sister of the late Mrs. C. SMITH.)
Illustrated and Illuminated.
London:
Cundall & Addey, Old Bond Street.
1851.

280. r. 200



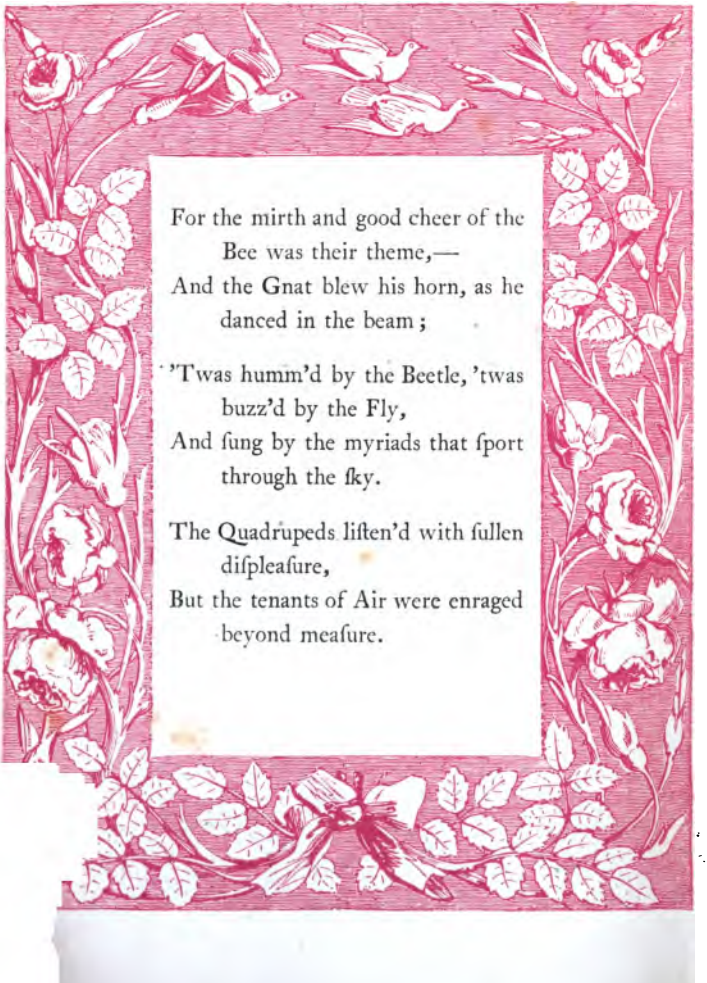
PRINTED BY C. WHITTINGHAM,
1851.



THE

Peacock at Home.

THE Butterfly's Ball and the
Graſshopper's Feaſts
Excited the ſpleen of the
Birds and the Beaſts:



For the mirth and good cheer of the
Bee was their theme,—
And the Gnat blew his horn, as he
danced in the beam;

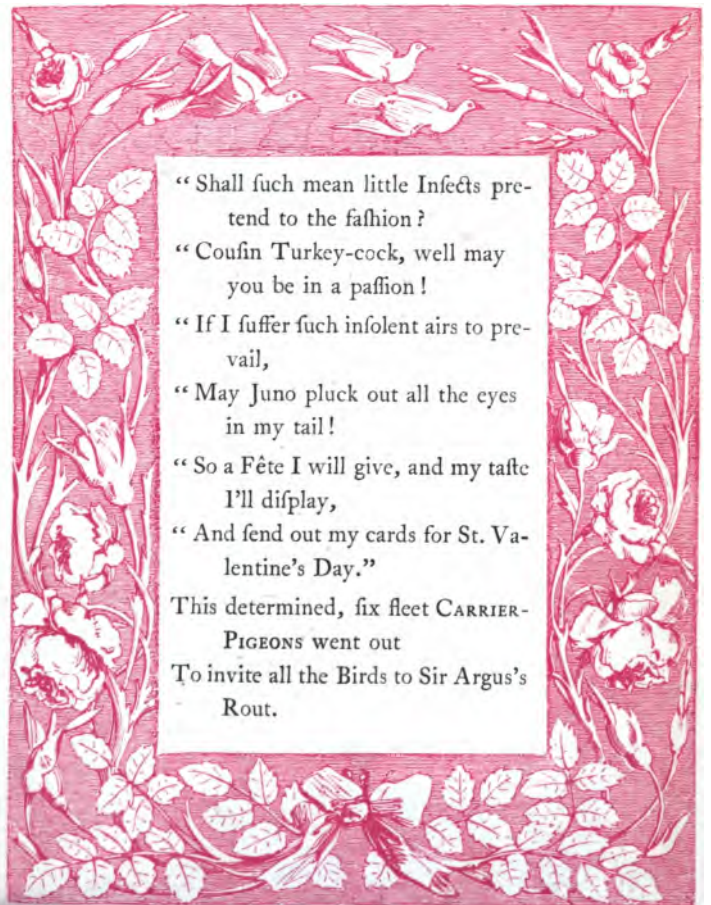
'Twas humm'd by the Beetle, 'twas
buzz'd by the Fly,
And ſung by the myriads that ſport
through the ſky.

The Quadrupeds liſten'd with ſullen
diſpleaſure,
But the tenants of Air were enraged
beyond meaſure.

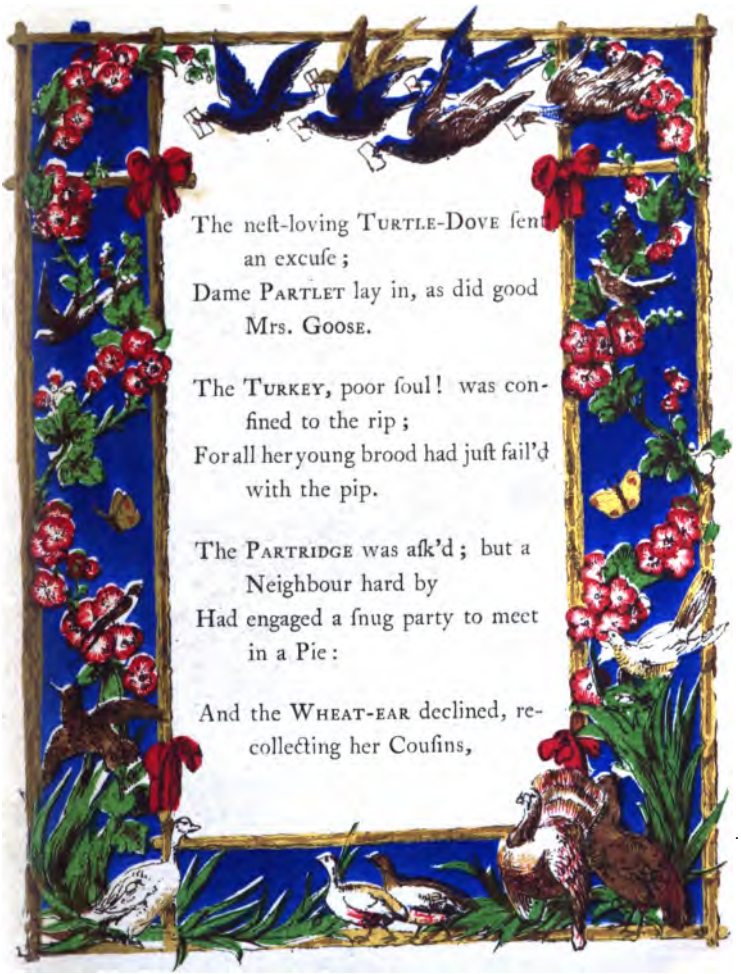
The Peacock diſplay'd his bright
plumes to the Sun,
And, addreſſing his Mates, thus in-
dignant begun:

"Shall we, like domeſtic, inelegant
Fowls,
"As unpoliſh'd as Geeſe, and as
ſtupid as Owls,

"Sit tamely at home, hum-drum
with our Spouſes,
"While Crickets and Butterflies
open their houſes?



"Shall ſuch mean little Inſects pretend to the faſhion?
"Couſin Turkey-cock, well may you be in a paſſion!
"If I ſuffer ſuch inſolent airs to prevail,
"May Juno pluck out all the eyes in my tail!
"So a Fête I will give, and my taſte I'll diſplay,
"And ſend out my cards for St. Valentine's Day."
This determined, ſix fleet CARRIER-PIGEONS went out
To invite all the Birds to Sir Argus's Rout.

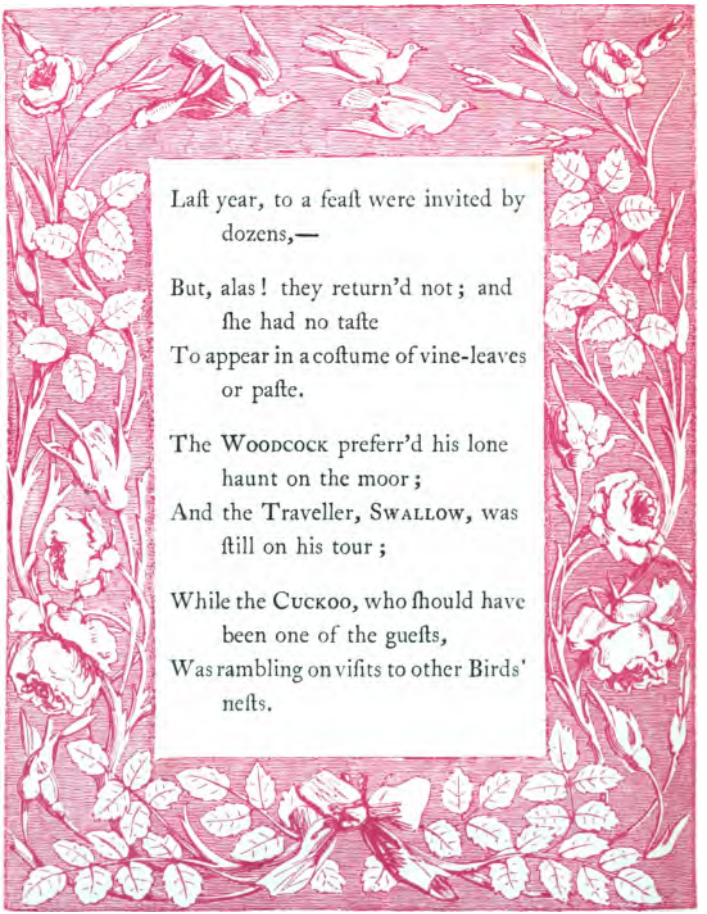


The neſt-loving TURTLE-DOVE ſent an excuſe;
Dame PARTLET lay in, as did good Mrs. GOOSE.

The TURKEY, poor ſoul! was confined to the rip;
For all her young brood had juſt fail'd with the pip.

The PARTRIDGE was aſk'd; but a Neighbour hard by
Had engaged a ſnug party to meet in a Pie:

And the WHEAT-EAR declined, recollecting her Couſins,

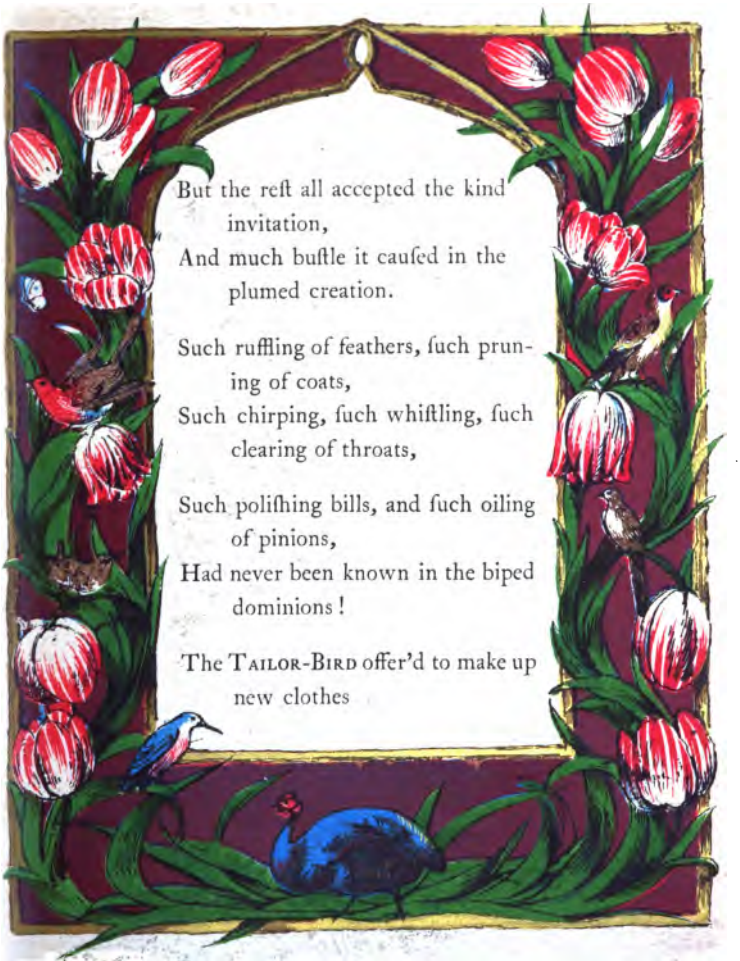


Laſt year, to a feaſt were invited by
dozens,—

But, alas! they return'd not; and
ſhe had no taſte
To appear in a coſtume of vine-leaves
or paſte.

The Woodcock preferr'd his lone
haunt on the moor;
And the Traveller, Swallow, was
ſtill on his tour;

While the Cuckoo, who ſhould have
been one of the gueſts,
Was rambling on viſits to other Birds'
neſts.

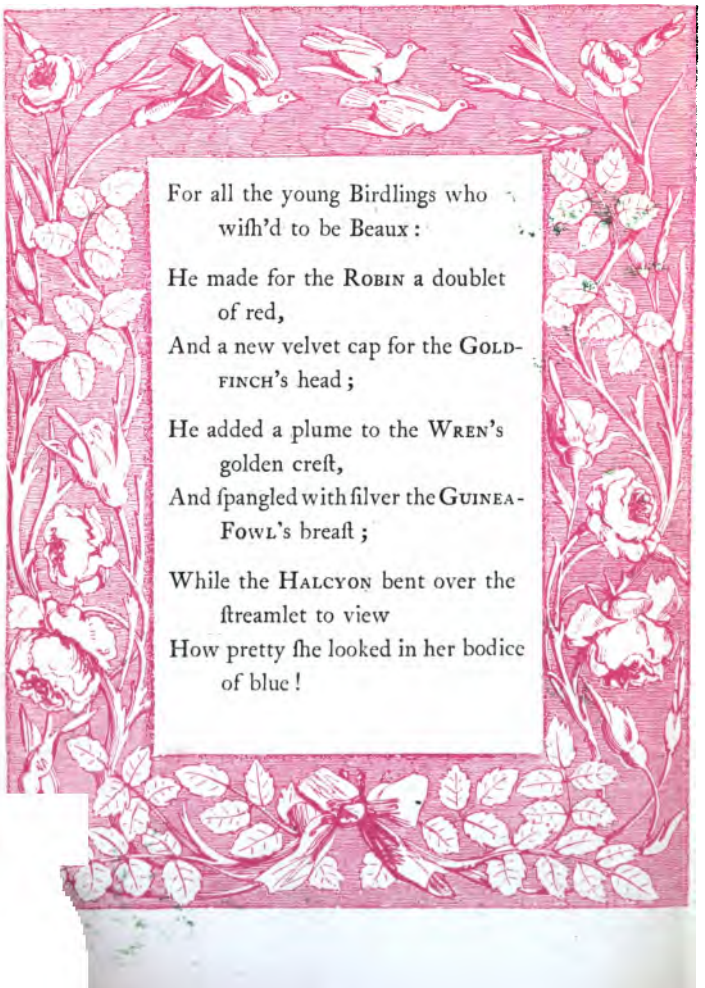


But the reſt all accepted the kind
invitation,
And much buſtle it cauſed in the
plumed creation.

Such ruffling of feathers, ſuch prun-
ing of coats,
Such chirping, ſuch whiſtling, ſuch
clearing of throats,

Such poliſhing bills, and ſuch oiling
of pinions,
Had never been known in the biped
dominions!

The Tailor-Bird offer'd to make up
new clothes

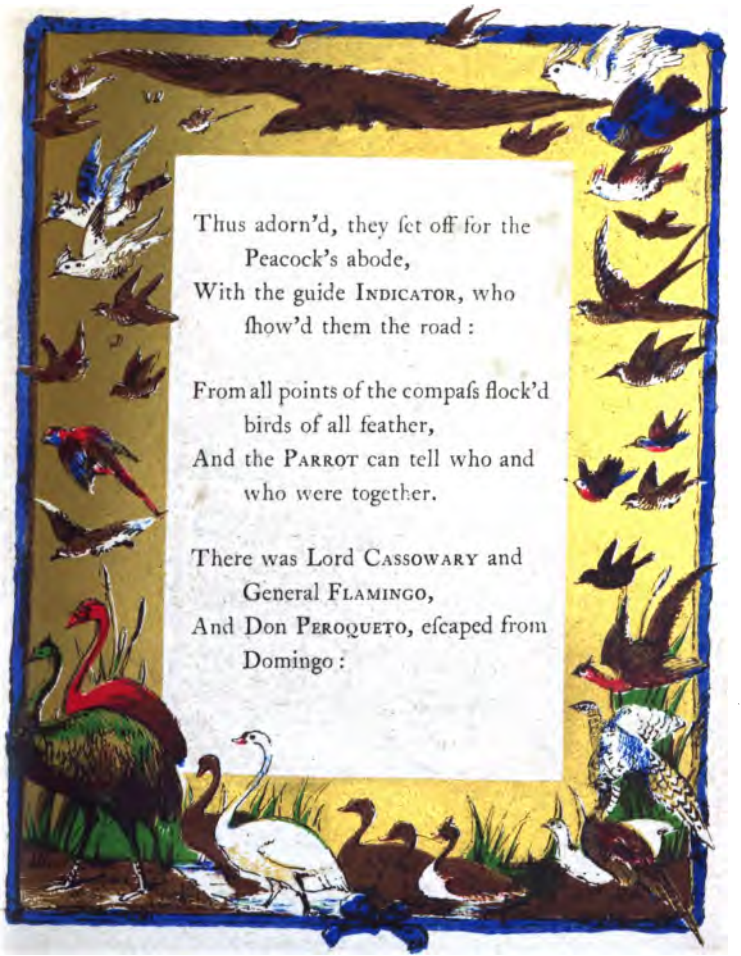


For all the young Birdlings who
wiſh'd to be Beaux:

He made for the ROBIN a doublet
of red,
And a new velvet cap for the GOLD-
FINCH's head;

He added a plume to the WREN's
golden creſt,
And ſpangled with ſilver the GUINEA-
FOWL's breaſt;

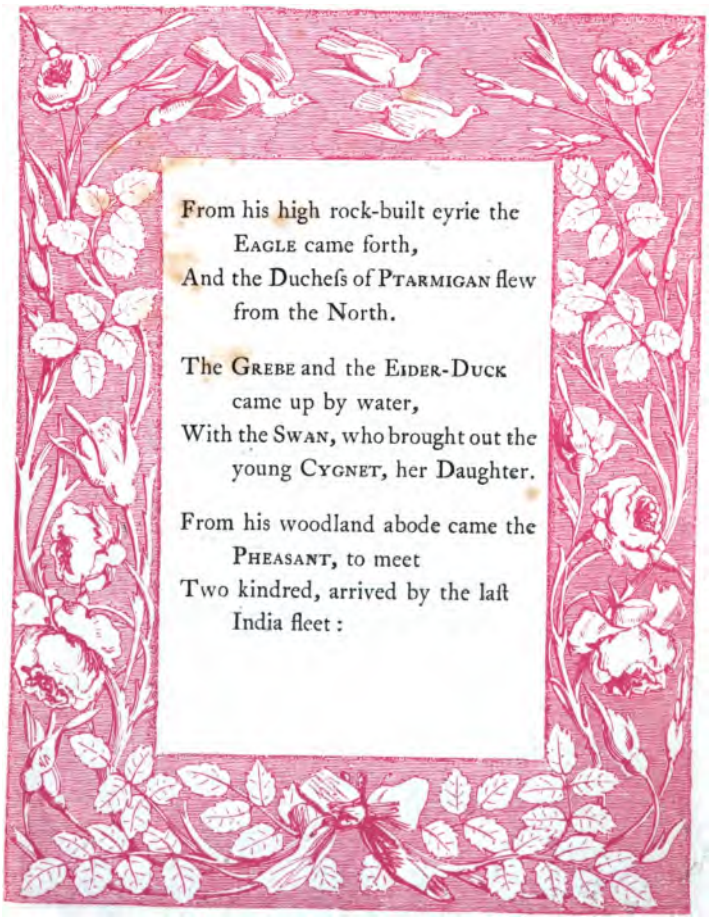
While the HALCYON bent over the
ſtreamlet to view
How pretty ſhe looked in her bodice
of blue!



Thus adorn'd, they ſet off for the
Peacock's abode,
With the guide INDICATOR, who
ſhow'd them the road:

From all points of the compaſs flock'd
birds of all feather,
And the PARROT can tell who and
who were together.

There was Lord CASSOWARY and
General FLAMINGO,
And Don PEROQUETO, eſcaped from
Domingo:



From his high rock-built eyrie the
EAGLE came forth,
And the Ducheſs of PTARMIGAN flew
from the North.

The GREBE and the EIDER-DUCK
came up by water,
With the SWAN, who brought out the
young CYGNET, her Daughter.

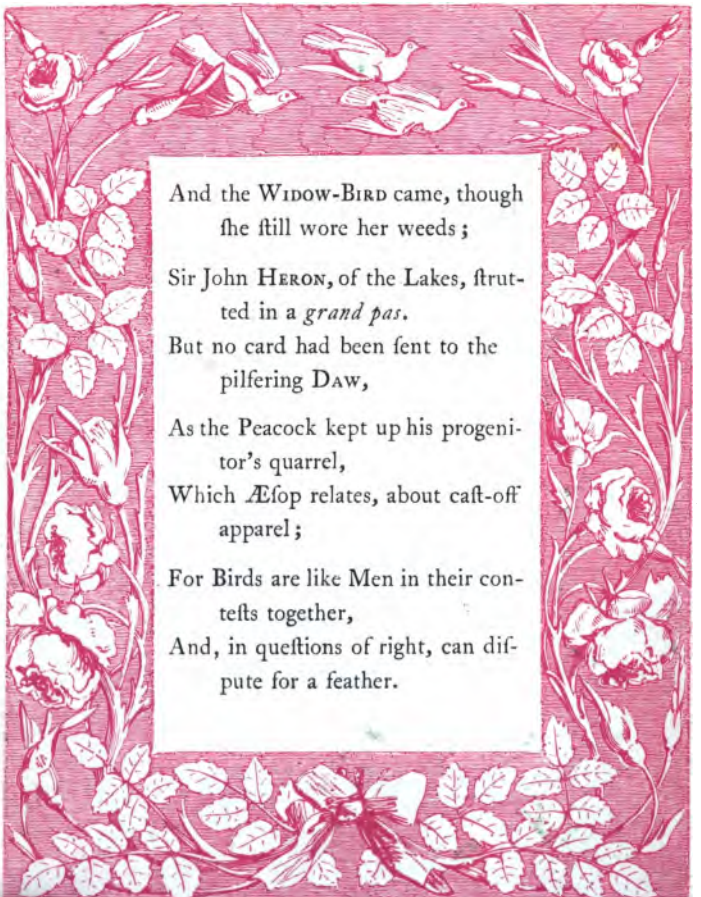
From his woodland abode came the
PHEASANT, to meet
Two kindred, arrived by the laſt
India fleet:

The one, like a Nabob, in habit moſt ſplendid,
Where Gold with each hue of the rainbow was blended;

In ſilver and black, like a fair penſive Maid
Who mourns for her love, was the other array'd.

The Chough came from Cornwall, and brought up his Wife;
The Grouse travell'd ſouth, from his Lairdſhip in Fife;

The Bunting forſook her ſoft neſt in the reeds;

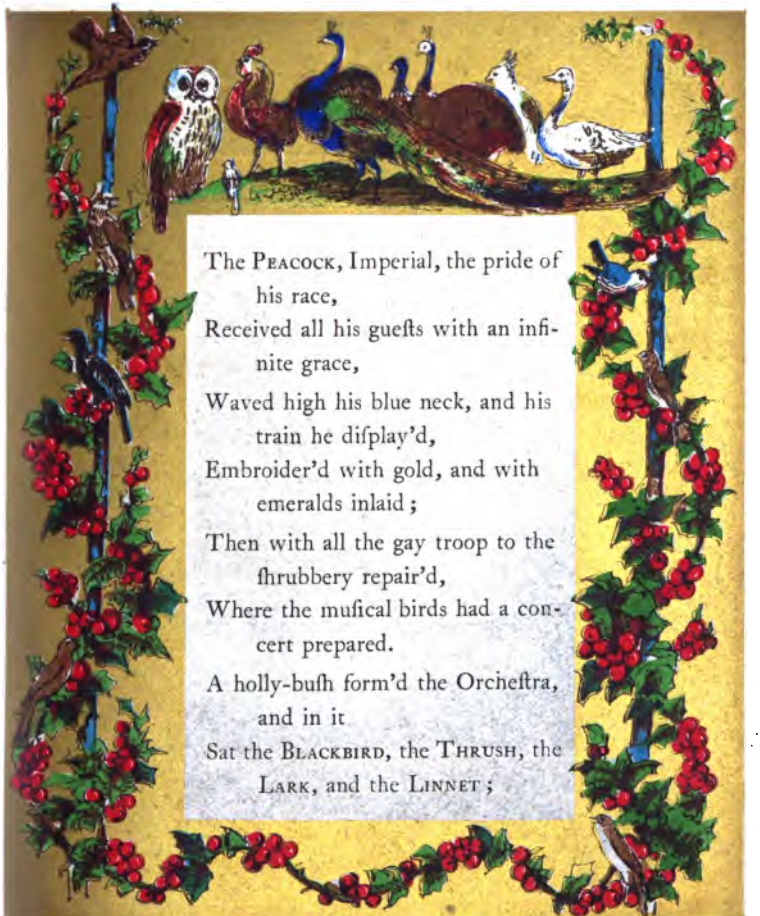


And the WIDOW-BIRD came, though
she ſtill wore her weeds;

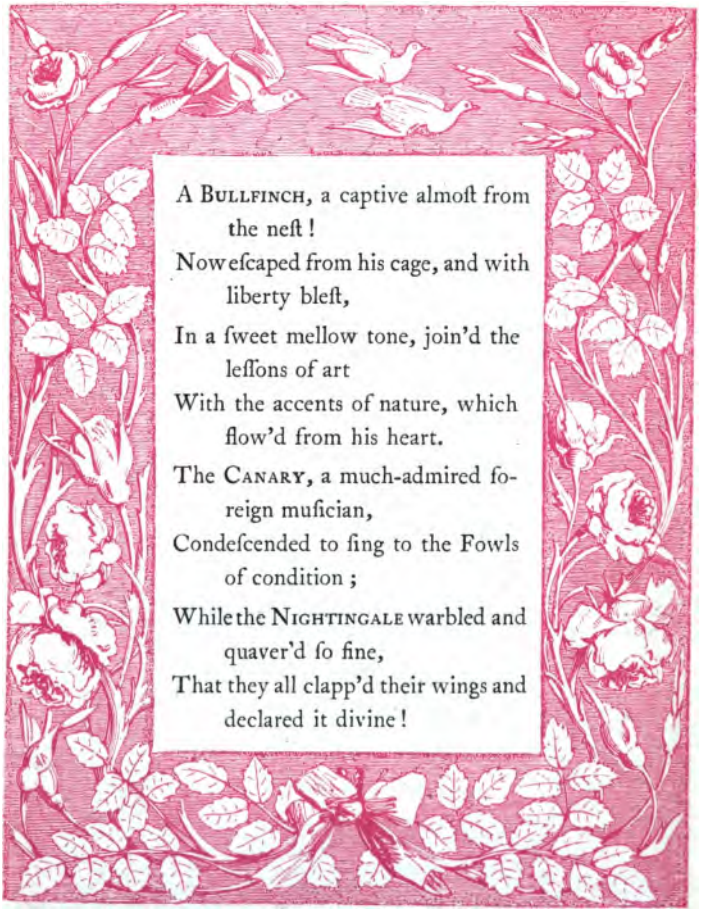
Sir John HERON, of the Lakes, ſtrut-
ted in a *grand pas*.
But no card had been ſent to the
pilfering DAW,

As the Peacock kept up his progeni-
tor's quarrel,
Which Æſop relates, about caſt-off
apparel;

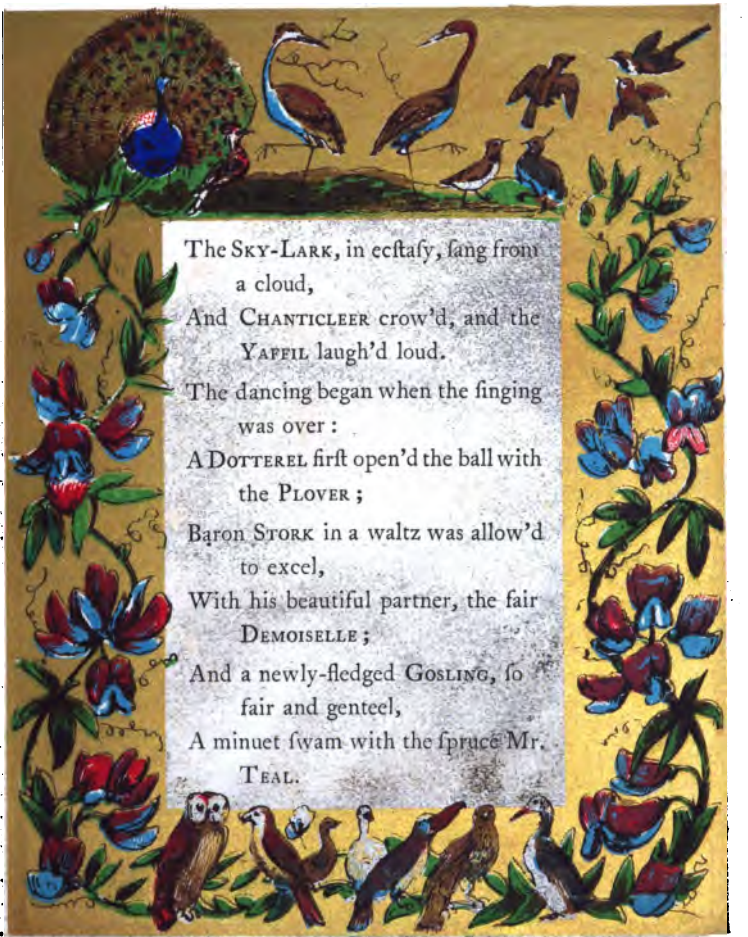
For Birds are like Men in their con-
teſts together,
And, in queſtions of right, can diſ-
pute for a feather.



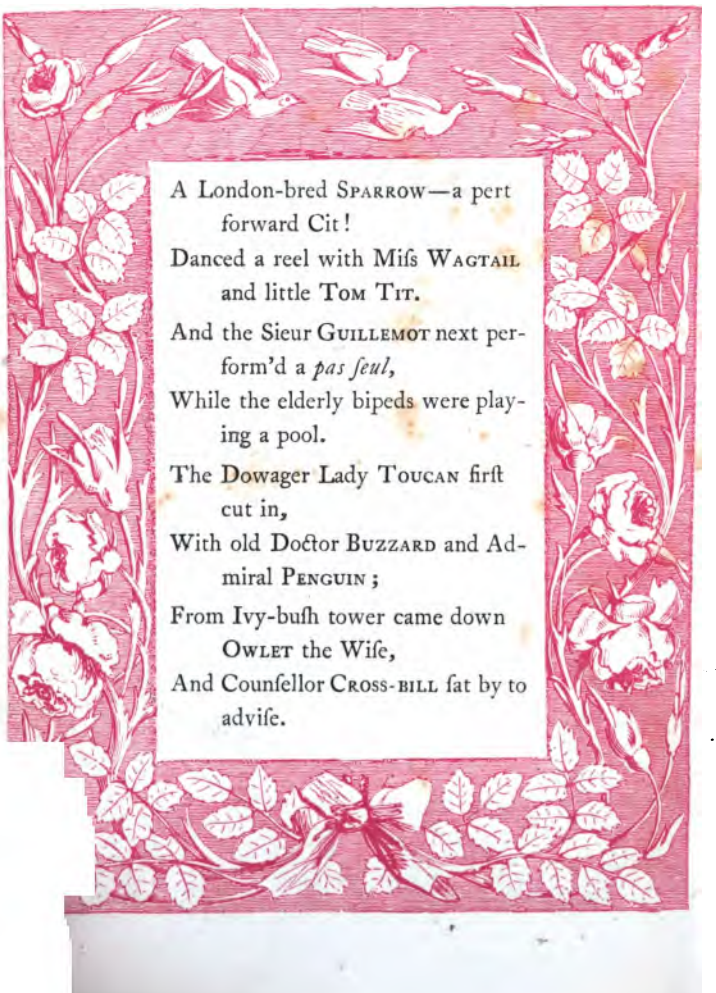
The PEACOCK, Imperial, the pride of his race,
Received all his gueſts with an infinite grace,
Waved high his blue neck, and his train he diſplay'd,
Embroider'd with gold, and with emeralds inlaid;
Then with all the gay troop to the ſhrubbery repair'd,
Where the muſical birds had a concert prepared.
A holly-buſh form'd the Orcheſtra, and in it
Sat the BLACKBIRD, the THRUSH, the LARK, and the LINNET;



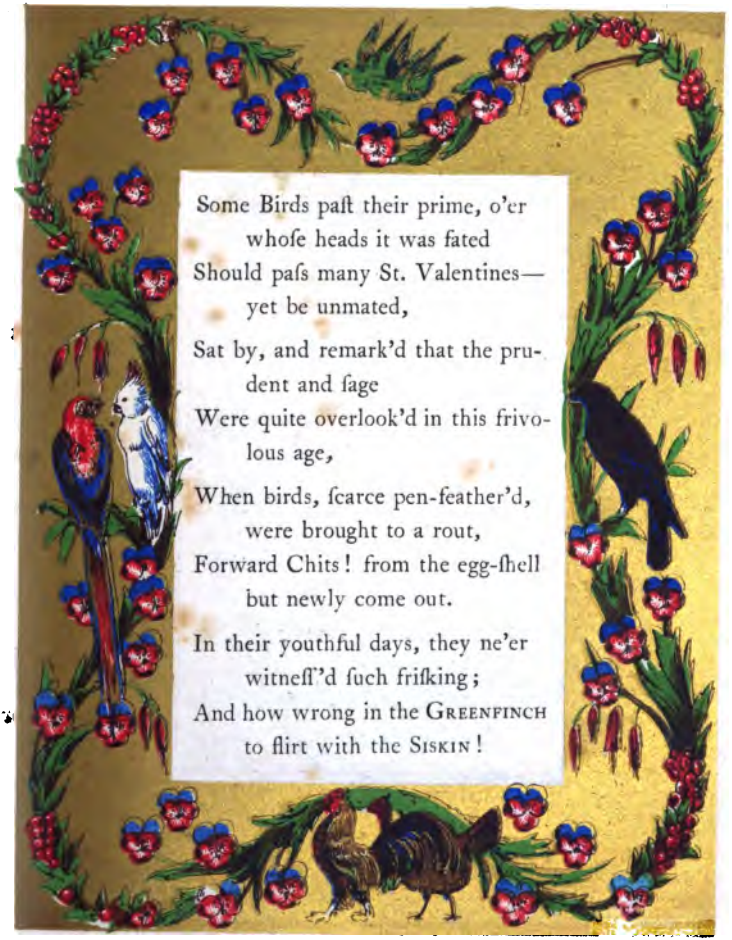
A BULLFINCH, a captive almoſt from
the neſt!
Now eſcaped from his cage, and with
liberty bleſt,
In a ſweet mellow tone, join'd the
leſſons of art
With the accents of nature, which
flow'd from his heart.
The CANARY, a much-admired fo-
reign muſician,
Condeſcended to ſing to the Fowls
of condition;
While the NIGHTINGALE warbled and
quaver'd ſo fine,
That they all clapp'd their wings and
declared it divine!



The SKY-LARK, in ecſtaſy, ſang from
a cloud,
And CHANTICLEER crow'd, and the
YAFFIL laugh'd loud.
The dancing began when the ſinging
was over:
A DOTTEREL firſt open'd the ball with
the PLOVER;
Baron STORK in a waltz was allow'd
to excel,
With his beautiful partner, the fair
DEMOISELLE;
And a newly-fledged GOSLING, ſo
fair and genteel,
A minuet ſwam with the ſpruce Mr.
TEAL.



A London-bred SPARROW—a pert
forward Cit!
Danced a reel with Miſs WAGTAIL
and little TOM TIT.
And the Sieur GUILLEMOT next per-
form'd a *pas ſeul*,
While the elderly bipeds were play-
ing a pool.
The Dowager Lady TOUCAN firſt
cut in,
With old Doctor BUZZARD and Ad-
miral PENGUIN;
From Ivy-buſh tower came down
OWLET the Wiſe,
And Counſellor CROSS-BILL ſat by to
adviſe.

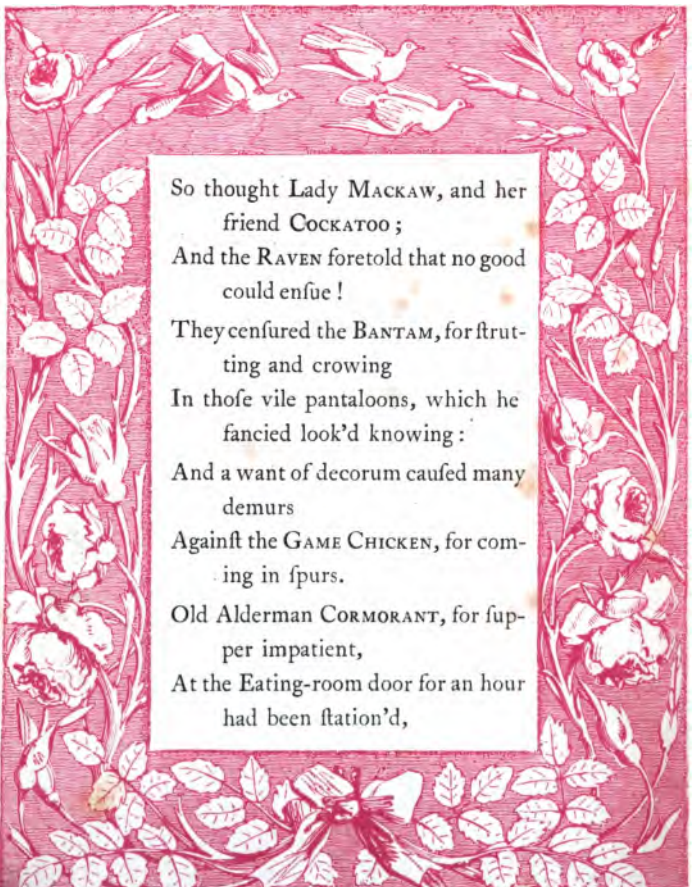


Some Birds paſt their prime, o'er
whoſe heads it was fated
Should paſs many St. Valentines—
yet be unmated,

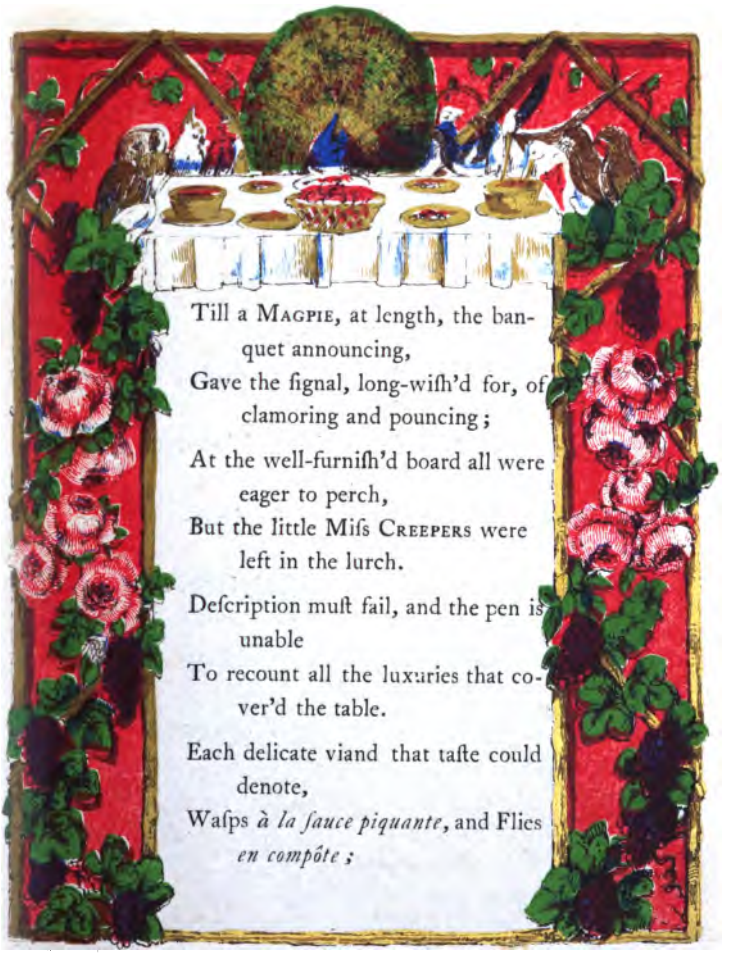
Sat by, and remark'd that the pru-
dent and ſage
Were quite overlook'd in this frivo-
lous age,

When birds, ſcarce pen-feather'd,
were brought to a rout,
Forward Chits! from the egg-ſhell
but newly come out.

In their youthful days, they ne'er
witneſſ'd ſuch friſking;
And how wrong in the GREENFINCH
to flirt with the SISKIN!



So thought Lady MACKAW, and her
friend COCKATOO;
And the RAVEN foretold that no good
could enſue!
They cenſured the BANTAM, for ſtrut-
ting and crowing
In thoſe vile pantaloons, which he
fancied look'd knowing:
And a want of decorum cauſed many
demurs
Againſt the GAME CHICKEN, for com-
ing in ſpurs.
Old Alderman CORMORANT, for ſup-
per impatient,
At the Eating-room door for an hour
had been ſtation'd,

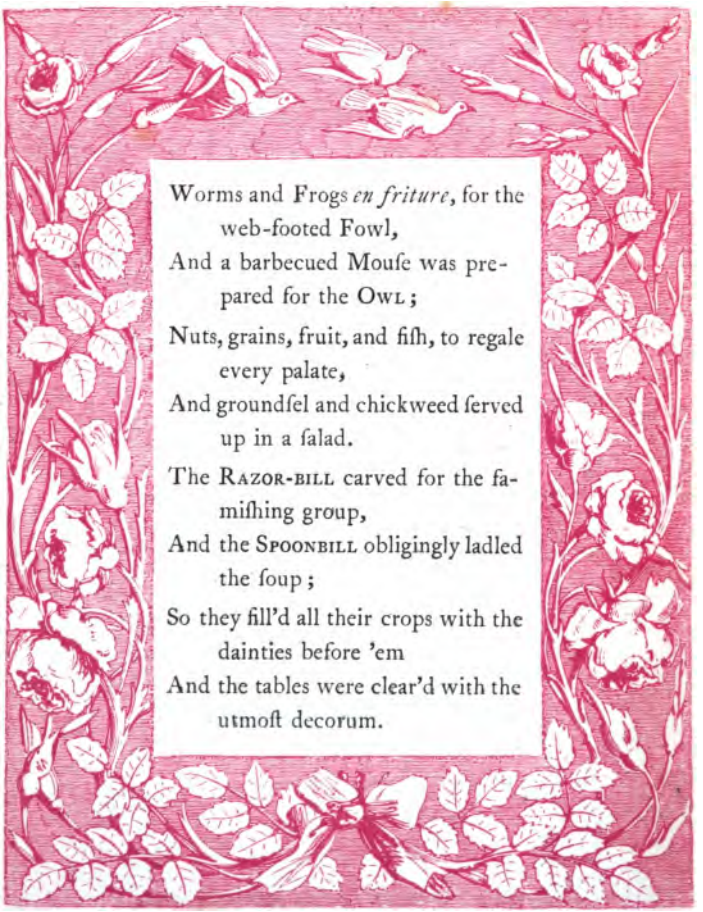


Till a MAGPIE, at length, the banquet announcing,
Gave the ſignal, long-wiſh'd for, of clamoring and pouncing;

At the well-furniſh'd board all were eager to perch,
But the little Miſs CREEPERS were left in the lurch.

Deſcription muſt fail, and the pen is unable
To recount all the luxuries that cover'd the table.

Each delicate viand that taſte could denote,
Waſps *à la ſauce piquante*, and Flies *en compôte*;



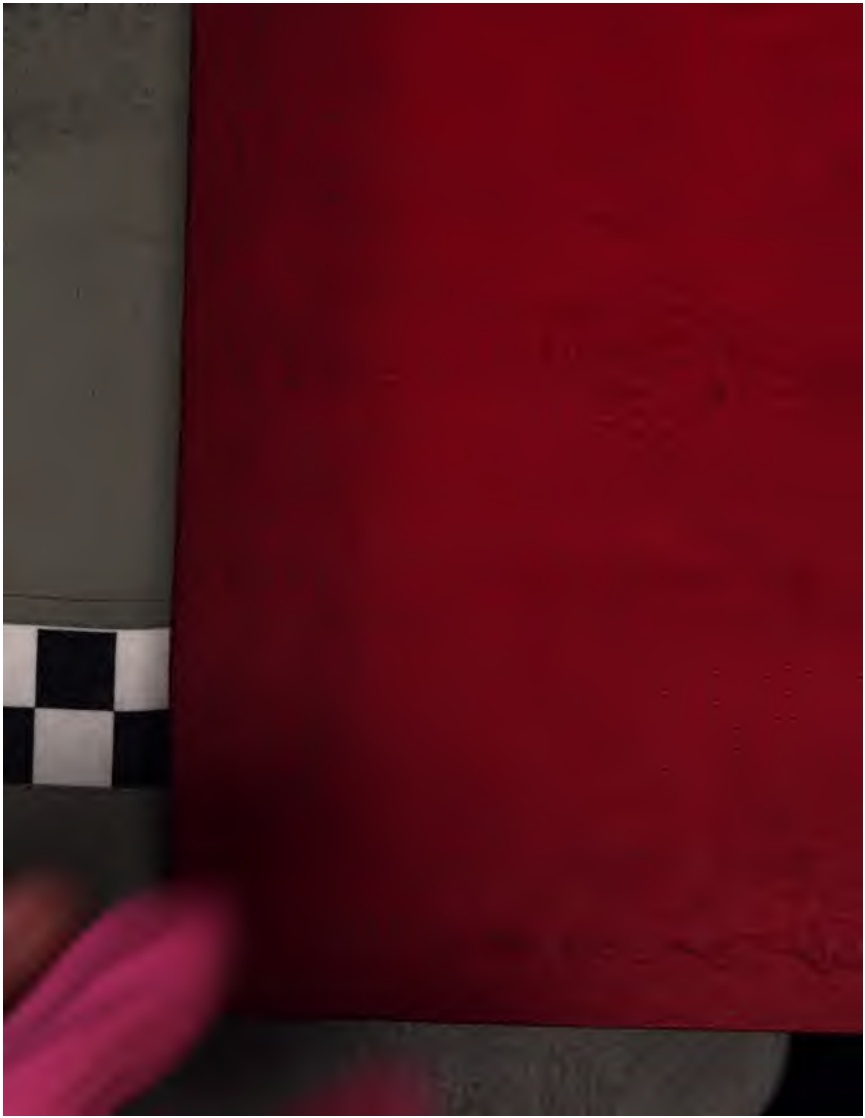
Worms and Frogs *en friture*, for the
web-footed Fowl,
And a barbecued Mouſe was pre-
pared for the Owl;
Nuts, grains, fruit, and fiſh, to regale
every palate,
And groundſel and chickweed ſerved
up in a ſalad.
The Razor-bill carved for the fa-
miſhing group,
And the Spoonbill obligingly ladled
the ſoup;
So they fill'd all their crops with the
dainties before 'em
And the tables were clear'd with the
utmoſt decorum.

When they gaily had caroll'd till peep
of the dawn,
The LARK gently hinted 'twas time
to be gone;

And his clarion, ſo ſhrill, gave the
company warning,
That CHANTICLEER ſcented the gales
of the morning,

So they chirp'd in full chorus, a
friendly adieu;
And, with hearts beating light as the
plumage that grew

On their merry-thought boſoms,
away they all flew.

Then long live the PEACOCK, in ſplendour unmatch'd,
Whoſe Ball ſhall be talk'd of by Birds yet unhatch'd!

His praiſe let the TRUMPETER loudly proclaim,
And the GOOSE lend her quill to tranſmit it to Fame.